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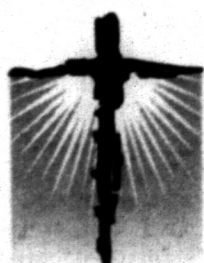
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BAPTISTS

Gustav wraps up, Ike prep ramps up

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

Mississippi Baptist disaster relief volunteers prepared more than 22,500 meals in the aftermath of Hurricane Gustav for residents of southwest Mississippi who were without electricity for several days after the storm — and they remain on alert as Hurricane Ike bears down on the Gulf Coast region.

The Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief Task Force's mass feeding unit prepared 18,300 meals from the parking lot of First Church, Natchez, while a smaller feeding unit from Briar Hill Church, Florence, prepared about 4,200 meals at Diamondhead Church, Diamondhead.

Both units started cooking on September 3 and closed operations on September 6. The Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief Task Force's mass feeding unit utilized 21 trained volunteers, while the Briar Hill Church unit had 12 trained volunteers on site.

The meals were distributed primarily in Adams and Wilkinson Counties, where significant damage and long-term power outages led to the need for the feeding units, said Jim Didlake, men's ministry director for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board in Jackson and Mississippi Baptists' disaster relief coordinator.

Chain saw teams comprising 16 volunteers from Yalobusha Association in Coffeeville and Calhoun Association in Calhoun City were also activated in the Natchez area, Didlake said, along with a shower unit and two volunteers from Lafayette Association in Oxford.

Jerry Sanford, pastor of First Church, Sardis, was in charge of the relief effort, while Donna Swarts, a member of Goodwater Church, Magee, and current



COOKING FOR THOUSANDS — Sandy Day, a member of Tylertown Church, Tylertown, stirs a large tilt skillet of beef stew September 4 at the Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief Task Force's mass feeding unit at First Church, Natchez. The mass feeding unit, which was activated after Hurricane Gustav knocked out power across southwest Mississippi and left many people unable to prepare food, served approximately 18,300 meals before shutting down on September 6. A smaller feeding unit from Briar Hill Church, Florence, served about 4,500 additional meals from their location at Diamondhead Church, Diamondhead. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

president of the Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union, served as liaison to the American Red Cross.

"It was our first time to go into that part of the state with feeding units, and I would say it was a good response both for us and for the people who live in the area. It was an opportunity for a lot of Mississippi Baptists to see their Margaret Lackey State Missions Offering dollars at work," Didlake said.

Gifts to the Margaret Lackey State Missions Offering help finance a number of missions opportunities for Mississippi Baptists, including the disaster relief program.

Didlake said all Mississippi Baptist disaster relief units remain on alert as Hurricane Ike entered the Gulf of Mexico at publication deadline. "We'll stay prepared, even though the predicted tracks take the storm into southwest Louisiana or Texas," he said.

Didlake also said Garaywa Camp and Conference Center, the Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union camp in Clinton that has served as a staging area for out-of-state Baptist disaster relief units on their way to Louisiana after Gustav, is being prepared to shelter those out-of-state volunteers if it becomes necessary to evacuate south Louisiana ahead of Ike.

"We are looking at a (Hurricane) Rita-like strike which is reminiscent of three years ago," Mickey Caison, the North American Mission Board's adult volunteer mobilization team leader and director of operations at the Southern Baptist Disaster Operations Center, told Baptist Press on September 8.

"We are developing an evacuation plan where they will be brought out of the possible impact area and then re-established after Ike goes through," he said.

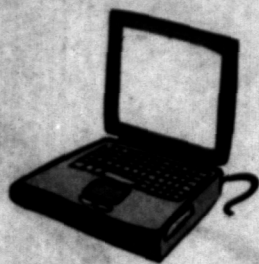
Caison told Baptist Press he is concerned about fatigue among the volunteers. "We are looking at whether we are going to be able to mobilize enough people. What we are looking at now is mobilizing from farther away."

"For instance, Louisiana is running out of volunteers. We're going to have to bring in volunteers from other states to support the Louisiana kitchens and so as we are beginning to develop that plan, how we are going to do that effectively and efficiently is our concern now."

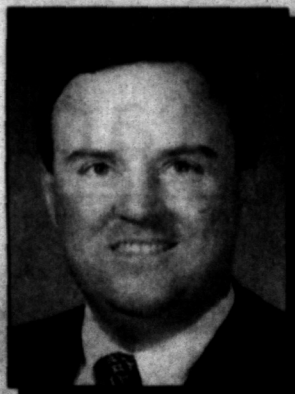
The 2008 hurricane season has also been an expensive one for the Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief Task Force, and contributions are being accepted to assist in the hurricane relief effort. Checks can be made payable to Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and designated to Hurricane Relief on the memo line. Contributions can be mailed the MBCB Business Office, Hurricane Relief, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530.



SERVING OTHERS — Members of an 11-person crew from First Church, Gulfport, help the North Carolina Baptist Men prepare meals last week for Hurricane Gustav victims at the Civic Center in Houma, La. Mass feeding units from around the Southern Baptist Convention — including the Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief unit — were activated along the Gulf Coast after Gustav came ashore in the Houma area. (Photo courtesy of James Edward Bates)



EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

EDITOR
William H. Perkins Jr.
wperkins@mbcb.org

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Tony Martin
tmartin@mbcb.org

LAYOUT/DESIGN
Benjamin Ivey
bivey@mbcb.org

ADVERTISING
Dana Richardson
drichardson@mbcb.org

CIRCULATION MANAGER
Brenda Quattlebaum
bquattlebaum@mbcb.org

EDITOR EMERITUS
Don McGregor

Baptist Record Advisory Committee:
Marcus Bowers, Brandon
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Postmaster:
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Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

Tel: (601) 968-3800
Fax: (601) 292-3330
E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org

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Fireproof is one hot movie

No doubt about it. Sherwood Church in Albany, Ga., which a few years ago had a vision to reach the world for Christ with the movie, *Facing the Giants*, has another surefire hit on their hands.

Fireproof will premiere September 26 in theaters across the country. Produced with five times the budget of *Facing the Giants* — but still a miniscule amount of money when compared to Hollywood blockbusters — *Fireproof* tells the story of the troubled marriage of Caleb (Kirk Cameron) and Elizabeth (Erin Bethea) Holt.

Caleb is a self-centered firefighter and Elizabeth is a rising star at the local hospital, where she serves as a public relations specialist. The difficulties they experience as they attempt to mesh their disparate goals and dreams into a marital relationship will be well-known to all couples whether they want to admit it or not.

Caleb wants what he wants and Elizabeth wants what she wants and, well, you'll just have to see the movie to find out how all of that turns out. Suffice to say, however, that their difficult journey has many twists and turns — many likely unanticipated by even the most sophisticated moviegoer.

There are moments that make your heart soar, and moments that make your heart drop to the floor. Some scenes are difficult to watch. There's humor and action. There are good guys and bad guys and conflict and all



the other elements of a good script. It's obvious that Sony Pictures, which bought into Sherwood Pictures after the success of *Facing the Giants*, lent a great deal of professional advice to this production.

Best of all, *Fireproof* is a true Christ-centered movie that portrays God and His Son as truly invested in our lives and interested in our futures. How many big-budget Hollywood productions contain that message?

Cameron, a Hollywood veteran and devout Christian who starred in the *Left Behind* movie series, told Michael Foust of Baptist Press that he became interested in Sherwood Pictures after meeting some Sherwood Church ministers in an airport. The ministers gave him a DVD copy of *Facing the Giants*, and he was hooked after one viewing.

Cameron called Alex Kendrick, the

Sherwood Church member who directed *Facing the Giants*, and they talked about Cameron's involvement in a future project. About a year later, Kendrick called Cameron with an offer to star in *Fireproof*.

"I loved the fact that it was an all-volunteer cast and crew and I loved just the motive and the heart behind *Facing the Giants*," Cameron told Foust, "and my wife and I thought, 'Wow, this is Christian ministry, this is really using the media to do something great, so we just wanted to be part of it.'"

"Marriages are struggling. It was a great script. I knew it was going to be a great movie, and we just wanted to be involved."

Mississippi native Michael Catt, the senior pastor at Sherwood Church and executive producer of *Fireproof*, told Foust that opening weekend box office for the movie is crucial if it is to expand its run to the maximum number of theaters.

"We had a great opening weekend with *Facing the Giants*, and so it spread to other cities. The key to that was churches, the key to that was pastors standing up in their pulpits and saying, 'We gripe about Hollywood. Here's something positive. It's a film we can go to and support.'"

Go see the movie, and you'll understand why it's named "Fireproof" and also uncover the meaning of the movie's slogan: "Never leave your partner behind." It's worth the trip to the theater.

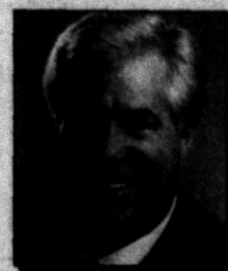
The poison peddled by the euthanasia movement here in the United States continues to take its toll. Assisted suicide was legalized in Oregon in the 1990s, and pro-death advocates are now pushing hard to make it legal in the state of Washington, where Initiative 1000 would allow any competent adult suffering from a terminal illness to make a written request for medication that the patient may self-administer to end his or her life.

The average reader would interpret Initiative 1000 as helping terminal patients commit suicide, plain and simple — but the euthanasia movement has tried to mask that plain truth with soothing euphemisms. Rather than acknowledging that the initiative promotes assisted suicide, the text states the "request" will allow the patient to end their life "in a humane and dignified manner."

Then, in a classic example of double speak, the text goes on to state, "Actions taken in accordance with this chapter do not, for any purpose, constitute suicide, assisted suicide, mercy killing, or homicide, under the law. State reports shall not refer to practice under this chapter as 'suicide' or 'assisted suicide.'"

Funny, these "actions" sound just like the Merriam-Webster dictionary definition

GUEST OPINION:



Beware soft words

By Ken Connor, chairman
Center for a Just Society
Washington, D.C.

of suicide: "the act or an instance of taking one's own life voluntarily and intentionally especially by a person of years of discretion and of sound mind."

If passed this November, Initiative 1000 will transform the legal landscape of the state of Washington. The change would parallel Oregon's decade-long acceptance of assisted suicide, a practice that has given rise to a myriad of problems.

According to a fact sheet from National Right to Life, Oregon "conducts no independent reviews of assisted suicide deaths." Further, physicians who prescribe lethal drugs "only file required reports about 80.2% of the time." Incredibly, in "76.1% of these cases, physicians said that they had not perceived their act as the ending of life."

Not surprisingly, stories of abuse abound. In 1998, an Oregon psychologist decided

that 85-year-old Kate Cheney was "cognitively impaired" because she suffered from dementia and, therefore, was not qualified to pursue assisted suicide. Her family then found another psychologist who authorized the suicide.

That psychologist did so despite noting the undue influence of Cheney's family on the decision and that Cheney was so mentally impaired she could not remember basic information about her cancer diagnosis.

In 2007, two nurses in Oregon gave Wendy Melcher a lethal overdose. Though this was illegal (Oregon only allows physicians to prescribe lethal drugs), one of the nurses said she provided the overdose "because she believed [Melcher] to be in uncontrollable pain."

However, the nurse had never noted such pain prior to the day she administered the overdose. The truth is that the

euthanasia movement's ultimate goal is death on demand for everyone. Acceptance of euthanasia in select cases leads inevitably to an ever-expanding circle of those considered "killable." In 30 years of unpunished (and eventually legalized) assisted suicide in the Netherlands, the circle of accepted killings has been broadened to include the depressed, the disabled, and infants born with birth defects, according to an article in *National Review* magazine by Wesley J. Smith.

Once a society accepts the right to commit suicide to prevent suffering, the right to kill to prevent suffering follows.

The euthanasia movement's callous disregard for life needs to be unmasked. Behind euphemisms like "death with dignity" and "end of life choices" lies an insidious assault on the sanctity of human life. Euthanasia advocates view "choice" as the ultimate virtue and "freedom of choice" as the ultimate freedom. Stripped of its gloss, however, their position is that unless one has the freedom to kill himself, he isn't really free.

That's a perverse view of freedom and a sad view of life.

Connor can be contacted online at www.centerforajustsociety.org. His commentary appears courtesy of Baptist Press.

Haiti struggles as storms continue to roll

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (BP and local reports) — Mudslides, washed-out roads, and massive flooding hampered Florida Baptists' efforts to feed the hungry in Haiti where three tropical storms in as many weeks have killed at least 150 people and destroyed crops and other livelihoods.

The impoverished nation that shares an island with the Dominican Republic already was reeling from the massive rainfall produced by Tropical Storms Fay and Gustav before Hanna brought additional rains to the waterlogged country on September 3.

The killer storms left an estimated 15,000 animals dead and destroyed nearly 25,000 gardens, a source of food and income for many people in the Western Hemisphere's poorest country.

The heavy rains and strong winds also were responsible for the destruction of 34 churches and the homes of 27 pastors. Another 64 churches and 23 homes received damage in the storms.

With no relief in sight, the Haitians appear again to be in the aim of another storm as Hurricane Ike also targeted the Caribbean nation. Supporting a decade-long partnership, Florida Baptist Convention staff arrived in Port-au-Prince on September 1 to oversee the distribution of rice through Haitian churches.

The state convention underwrites the salaries of a national ministry director and six regional directors of missions in Haiti who supervised the delivery of food to the pastors.

"It was wonderful to see the eyes of the Haitians as we handed out the rice to feed their families," said Craig Culbreth, director of the Florida convention's partnership/missions department who is on the ground in Haiti. "We were told, 'Thanks for not forgetting about us.'"

Each family was given enough rice for four people for three days. The first feeding,

which provided nourishment to 2,800 families — or 11,200 people — was completed Wednesday at a cost of \$12,000.

Culbreth told of the difficulties they encountered while traveling outside Port-au-Prince to other villages across the nation. "We faced a mudslide in one place and a river or lake that flooded out the road in another as we sought to do food distributions in three locations.

"We were able to do the final one in Port-au-Prince as the road conditions blocked us [from] being involved with the first two."

While the group "never got past the mudslide, we sent a pastor in a boat to do the second distribution in the southern part of Haiti where the road was flooded," he added.

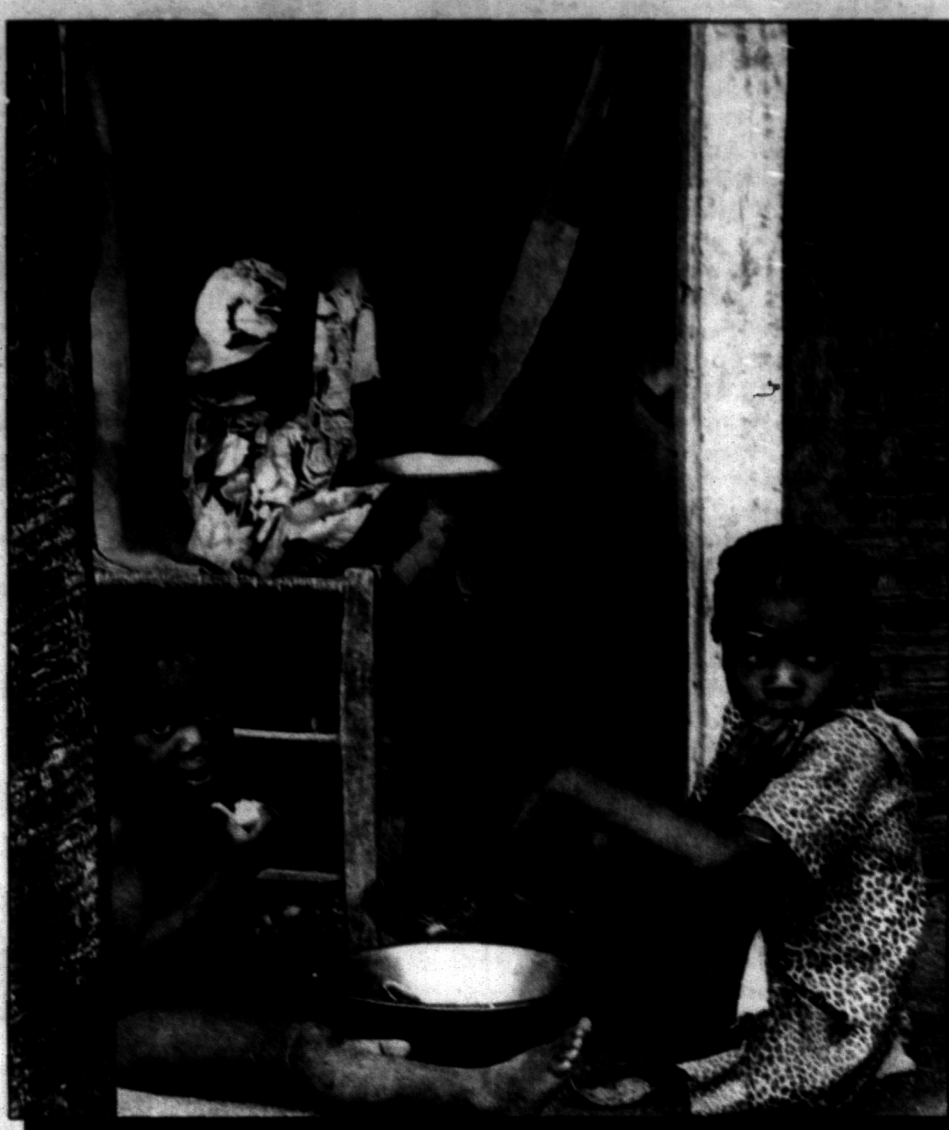
Culbreth expected the mudslide to be cleared within the week so that relief can reach the southern city of Jacmil. He expressed concern about the city of Gonaives, where 110,000 people live and floodwaters were said to be 12 feet high.

A second feeding is expected to be finished Monday. "A second feeding is vital," said Cecil Seagle, director of the Florida Baptist Convention's missions division. "We may have to do more after the next two storms clear, but at this point we can do no less."

Seagle reported that an additional \$12,000 has been sent to provide construction assistance to affected churches and pastors and to aid in the second food distribution.

"The money will provide funding for food and meager assistance for our pastors and directors of missions who have no place to live or are in desperate need of tin for repairs," Seagle said.

Culbreth was accompanied on the trip by Rick Lawrence, direc-



NEAR STARVATION — Haitian children eat fruit that fell to the ground during recent hurricanes/tropical storms that have drenched the Caribbean nation. Florida Baptists, who have a partnership with Haitian Baptist churches, led a food distribution effort in the community where hundreds of animals have died and crops have been swept away by the storms. The residents of some villages unreachable because of mud slides may be near starvation. (BP photo by Craig Culbreth/Florida Baptist Convention)

tor of the convention's church planting department, and Colman Pratt, pastor of Union Park First Church in Orlando.

The pair was "a great encouragement to the pastors we have met," Culbreth said. "They have prayed with them and told them, 'Do not give up. The storm was big, but God is bigger.'"

Meanwhile, now that Tropical Storm Hanna is no longer a threat to Florida, Fritz Wilson, state disaster relief director for the Florida Baptist Convention, and his team are turning their full attention to Ike — the next hurricane in

what seems to be a never-ending string of storms tearing across the Atlantic toward Florida and the Gulf of Mexico.

Florida dodged the first two bullets — Gustav and Hanna — and has apparently avoided a direct hit from Hurricane Ike.

Through careful coordination with the North American Mission Board (NAMB) disaster operations center in Alpharetta, Ga., — and with Hanna hovering for days over the Bahamas — Florida Baptists did not deploy any of their disaster relief equipment to Louisiana or Mississippi for Hurricane Gustav.

Looking back

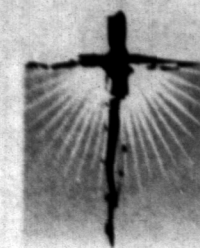
10 years ago
John Landrum, founder of the Fellowship of Christian Casino Workers (FCCW) and chaplain to the Mississippi Beach, continues to guide ministry to casino workers. One casino invites the group to have a booth at the annual employee's health fair, and the group distributes fifty Bibles.

20 years ago
More than 900 people participate in a Nashville listening session called by the Southern Baptist Alliance. Participants are asked to ponder the question "Where do we go from here?" The meeting is called following the defeat of presidential candidate Richard Jackson of Phoenix.

30 years ago
Billy Graham joins with Southern Baptist evangelistic leaders in discussing and completing plans for the 1959 simultaneous Evangelistic Crusade during the recent Home Mission Conference at Ridgecrest.

Pastor prays at RNC

ST. PAUL, Minn. (BP) — With confetti falling and balloons popping, exuberant delegates at the Republican National Convention on September 4 settled down long enough for nominee John McCain's pastor, a Southern Baptist, to deliver the closing prayer. Dan Yeary, pastor of North Phoenix Church, has been McCain's pastor for approximately the past 15 years. McCain is not a member, although his wife Cindy is a member. McCain was raised Episcopalian. Yeary told Baptist Press earlier this year that he doesn't "have any doubt" that McCain "has a strong faith" and "is committed to Christ." Yeary also said the two men have two topics of conversation: faith and family. He said they never talk about politics. Yeary's closing prayer came minutes after McCain finished his acceptance speech and after confetti and balloons began falling from the rafters. "[W]e're reminded," Yeary prayed to God, "of the words You gave to Solomon: 'If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways,' You will hear from heaven and heal our land.' So we pray, humble us Lord, humble us as a people to serve You. Help us to seek Your face, alone."



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

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**YOU CAN RESPOND
RIGHT NOW!**

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

By Charles Marx, 1932 - 2004
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Clue: : $U=R$

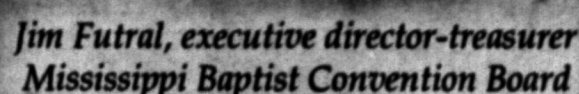
Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: John One Twelve.

Through the years, as I have seen those kinds of destructive things I have paused to wonder how many storms have those trees been through and were able to withstand nature's fury? As I came across some huge oak trees and large pine trees that had been snapped or toppled, I then came across a large planted area filled with young pines. My guess would be that they were 10 or 12 years old and not one pine tree in that stand was downed. That too was amazing because apparently the storm had come right through that area and toppled giant trees and left smaller stands of pine trees unscathed.

Since I am neither a tree nor a weather expert, it appeared to me that only one thing was different and that was the flexibility of the young trees. While the old trees had no doubt been through a lot in their lifetime, large mature trees can at times become stiff, unbending, unyielding, and feel as though they can bulk up against the force of the wind only to their own detriment at times. Now to be perfectly honest and certainly fair, you do not have to be older and maybe in the senior adult years of life in order to

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become inflexible in life. I have seen young people even before they hit their 20's that have a fixed, unbendable spirit related to what they think and the way they deal with others. It does not seem to serve them well, for often times the winds of adversity or the winds of others' opinions will strike them down. If in the process of growing up, you lock into your opinions and lock out others' feelings, you may find yourself inflexible and you will topple beneath the weight of the winds that swirl around you.

Many would rather fall than flex. I am not talking about compromising or in any way giving up significant, unshakable truths of the Scripture. I am talking about getting along with folks, being understanding of their viewpoint, and at times simply letting them have their way. It is not an altogether bad thing and it may well bless your life, save a marriage, and even help you to get along better at work. In

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our new life in Christ, God does not shape us to be hard, unyielding, and rigid in our approach to life and experiences. In fact, if you listen to Paul as he enumerates the various aspects of the fruit of the spirit at work in our lives he said we would be marked by love, joy, peace, gentleness, meekness, and temperance. Reading those words you can almost feel the Holy Spirit shaping a life so that it will have some understanding, some give and take, and some flexibility.

People who do not want to allow the Spirit of God to develop and shape that within them tend to go through life knocking heads with other folks and sometimes banging their head against a wall. Sometimes they topple

over and are lying in the grass. A friend of mine who was one of the first troops sent into the areas of devastation after the atomic bombs were dropped on Nagasaki and Hiroshima was telling me of the incredible, indescribable devastation that was there. He said it was exactly like you see in the pictures of it. Then he told me this one amazing observation: the things that were squared off, such as the walls and the buildings, all of those sorts of things were just flattened and/or annihilated but some of the rounded things – a few trees, some poles, some things of that nature survived.

We might well live, learn, and survive ourselves if we too had some rounded edges and just didn't go through life taking the full blast of the events and the winds around us. Having backbone is one thing while being flexible is another. Our Lord was the perfect example of gentle toughness. Let us follow Him!

The author can be contacted
at jfutral@mbcb.org.

Spanish Fort, Alabama, is looking for an enthusiastic full-time youth minister/education director. Qualified candidates should possess a seminary degree (Masters) and at least two years of full-time experience. Send your resume and recent photograph to timothy.j.caldwell@usace.army.mil, and to East Point Baptist Church, attn: Caldwell, P.O. Box 7517, Spanish Fort, Alabama 36577.

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Practical Principles for Christian Living



Watermelon vines in the grass: Religion, Gardening, and Politics

By Rob Chambers

Miss. Baptist Christian Action Commission

Baptists have historically held the view that the U.S. Constitution's First Amendment guarantees religious liberty to express their convictions on moral and cultural issues. This freedom was intended to reign not only at church but also everywhere from town hall to the halls of Congress.

In the 20th Century, it became politically mainstream that religious convictions on issues were not allowed in any area of government. This idea took root with the unconstitutional 1947 ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Everson v. Board of Education*.

This decision misinterpreted the Constitution as well as Thomas Jefferson's statement on a wall of separation between church and state. The high court erred in judgment when they said the "First Amendment has erected a wall between church and state. That wall must be kept high and impregnable. We could not approve the slightest breach."

Judges, politicians, and secular media



Chambers

have taken firm hold of this misconstrued idea of the "wall of separation." They have incorrectly and persistently interpreted Jefferson's original intent to mean that there can be no accommodation of religion in any area of government. This is why secularists want to keep prayer out of school and remove God from our currency and from our Pledge of Allegiance.

Jefferson's original intent was for a "wall of separation" to restrict the government from interfering with religious liberty, NOT to restrict churches' involvement in government, as decided in *Everson v. Board of Education*.

Jefferson's idea of separation can be explained using a gardening example.

I recall my father planting a small vegetable garden in the backyard. Over the years he continued to expand the garden. He persistently kept the grass out of the garden but was not concerned if watermelon vines grew into the grass.

Jefferson's intent is like this: the garden is the area of religious liberty, the area beyond the garden is the government, the boundary between the two is a wall, and the vine growing into the grass is the expression of religious liberty crossing the wall into government. The wall is to protect the church from the government—NOT the government from the church.

According to Jefferson, the church could freely exercise its influence beyond the wall into the public realm at the church's discretion. Had Jefferson intended a strict restriction of religion from government he would not have allowed Christian worship and taken part in it at the U.S. Capitol.

In addition, he asked the rhetorical question, "And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure if we have lost the only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with His wrath?" Jefferson believed that if anyone could violate one's religious liberty, it could only be God.

As a result of the above court case, the church has lost much ground on religious

liberty but has *wrongly* been led to think that since the government has chopped off the vine of prayer in school that pastors can't speak on moral issues.

Let us reverse the trend of churches stepping away from their God-appointed, prophetic role of speaking on moral issues, and cease handing it over to a secular society who increasingly calls evil good and good evil.

With the presidential election approaching, the Christian Action Commission will be providing IRS resources related to churches and elections, a 2008 Democrat/Republican Party Platform Comparison, and a 2008 Presidential Voter Guide focusing on issues like abortion, civil rights, energy, same-sex 'marriage,' hate crimes, and the method of interpreting the law when appointing judges.

These resources will be made available for free download by October 1st at www.christianaction.com and at the MS Baptist Convention on October 28th and 29th at the CAC booth. You may call (601-292-3329) and request hardcopies while supplies last.

Archbishop calls for meeting over Pelosi abortion comments

WASHINGTON (BP) — Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi, a Roman Catholic, has been invited by the archbishop of her home diocese to meet with him regarding her recent comments on abortion that contradict church teaching.

San Francisco Archbishop George Niederauer announced his invitation to Pelosi in a September 5 column in the archdiocese's newspaper, *Catholic San Francisco*.

Niederauer is the latest in a succession of Catholic leaders who have refuted contentions made by Pelosi in an August 24 interview on NBC's *Meet the Press* that the Catholic Church has been unable to define through the centuries when life begins and has only in the last 50 years determined it starts at conception.

In his column, Niederauer discussed the withholding of communion to Catholics who willfully violate the church's teaching on such issues as abortion. Although Niederauer did not declare a position on the potential discipline of Pelosi, he said it is his responsibility to decide how to deal with the issue and he has invited her to take part in a "conversation with me about these matters."

Pelosi, who has served as a Democratic representative from San Francisco for nearly 22 years,

elicited strong protest from the Catholic clergy and laity when she said on *Meet the Press* that the church has been indecisive on when life begins. She also argued it doesn't matter what the correct answer is, because a woman's right to an abortion trumps an unborn baby's rights, regardless of when his life begins.

Pelosi, asked about the beginning of life by *Meet the Press* host Tom Brokaw, responded, "I would say that as an ardent, practicing Catholic, this is an issue that I have studied for a long time." Pelosi, whose voting record has strongly supported abortion rights, continued, "...and what I know is, over the centuries, the doctors of the church have not been able to make the definition. ...We don't know. The point is, is that it shouldn't have an impact on the woman's right to choose."

Brokaw replied the Catholic Church "at the moment feels very strongly" about life beginning at conception.

"I understand," she responded, "and this is like maybe 50 years or something like that. So again, over the history of the church, this is an issue of controversy but it is, it is also true that God has given us, each of us, a free will and a responsibility to answer for our actions."

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, plus several members of the conference, firmly

rejected Pelosi's assertions. She "misrepresented the history and nature" of the Catholic Church's teaching against abortion, said Cardinal Justin Rigali, chairman of the U.S. Bishops' Committee on Pro-life Activities, and Bishop William Lori, chairman of the Committee on Doctrine, in an August 26 news release.

They said the church's Catechism teaches, "Since the first century the Church has affirmed the moral evil of every procured abortion. This teaching has not changed and remains unchangeable. Direct abortion, that is to say, abortion willed either as an end or a means, is gravely contrary to the moral law."

"[T]he Church teaches that from the time of conception (fertilization), each member of the human species must be given the full respect due to a human person, beginning with respect for the fundamental right to life."

Archbishops who weighed in on Pelosi's comments and corrected the record on Catholic teaching on abortion included Edward Egan of New York, Donald Wuerl of Washington, Francis George of Chicago, and Charles Chaput of Denver.

Niederauer said many Catholics had written him letters and e-mails expressing "their dismay and concern" about Pelosi's comments.

William Donohue of the

Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights commended Niederauer and said Pelosi should have announced she would no longer present herself for communion.

NOBTS partially open until electricity is fully restored

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — Many residents at the New Orleans Seminary (NOBTS) main campus received the news for which they had been waiting: at least a partial reopening of the campus after last week's evacuation caused by Hurricane Gustav.

Just after noon on September 5, a text message notified students of the opportunity to return. The campus was open for the partial return starting during the daylight hours of September 5. A more detailed explanation of the return plan was posted on the seminary's website.

Seminary President Chuck Kelley said power has been restored to the Manor Apartments, Staff Village, Courtyard Apartments, Oaks Apartments, Farnsworth Apartments, and all townhomes except 4303, 4305, and 4307 Iroquois.

"Instead, she chose to defy the teachings of the Catholic Church, misrepresent them in public and continue to insist that she is right," Donohue said. "Thus has she beckoned her bishop to act."

All other housing on campus is still without power. Residents of apartments without power are not yet allowed to return. Louisiana safety code provisions prohibit the occupation of multi-housing units that do not have power.

Kelley remains hopeful that the other campus housing units will receive power in the next few days. He encouraged members of the seminary family to watch for status updates on the seminary website at www.nobts.edu.

Kelley also issued a few words of warning for those who return. "We are told a curfew is still in effect, so plan to arrive during daylight hours only," he wrote in his update. "If you come, fill up your car with gas before entering New Orleans. Bring groceries with you. We think much of New Orleans will be back to normal by Monday (September 8). It is not there yet."

"If you come, be prepared for inconvenience," Kelley said

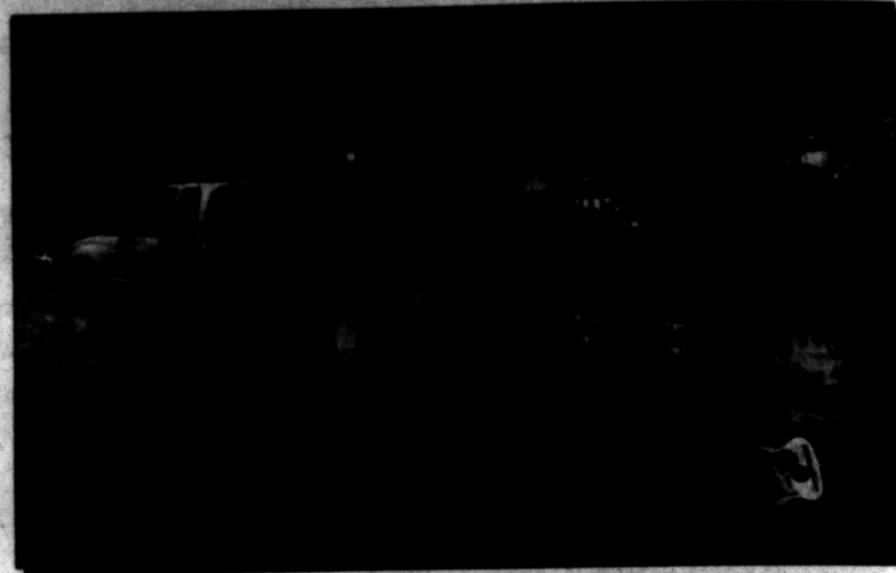
JUST FOR THE RECORD



MISSISSIPPI BAPTISTS



2a. Bible drillers, Corinth Church, Magee



6. Morgan Chapel Church GAs



2b. Bible drillers, Corinth Church, Magee



3. Hall ordination



4. RAs, Calvary Church, Bogue Chitto



5. Polk ordination

1. Crossgates Church, Brandon, will present Responding to Truth Not Reacting to Circumstances conference and high tea with Alicia Williamson Garcia, Sept. 26 and 27. For tickets and more information, call (601) 825-2562 or visit www.crossgates.org.

2. Corinth Church, Magee, recognizes its Bible drillers. Shown, from left, are Creston Giles, Callie May, Taylor White, and Clayton Giles; second photo, Peyton Varner.

3. Slayden Church, Lamar, recently ordained Mark Hall as deacon. Shown are Hall and pastor David Bishop.

4. Calvary Church, Bogue Chitto, had eight boys go to RA camp at Central Hills. Shown are Brian Rippy, Tucker Smith, Dylan Fry, Regan Wallace, Nathan Bilbo, Grant Leake, and Conner Douglas.

5. New Palestine Church, Picayune, licensed Zack Polk to the ministry Aug. 3. Shown are Wayne Carter, Polk, and Philip Caples.

6. GAs from Morgan Chapel Church, Sturgis, recently served at the Sturgis Bike Rally. Shown are the participants.

7. Todd Wilson, concert organist, will be featured at Northminster Church, Jackson, Sept. 12, 7:30 p.m. Free. For more information, call (601) 982-4703.

8. North Long Beach Church, Long Beach, ordained James Caruthers as deacon Aug. 24. Shown are pastor Charles Bonner, Caruthers, and Kathy Caruthers.

9. Egypt Church, Chickasaw County, held a baby dedication Aug. 17. Shown, from left, are pastor Larry Jeffries, Joe, Tori, Jacee Claire and Angela Ellis.

10. Ackerman Church, Ackerman, recently ordained Gary Vaughn and Chris Jenkins as deacons. Shown are AMD Roy Hawkins, pastor Danny Irvin, Vaughn, and Jenkins.



8. Caruthers ordination



9. Egypt Church baby dedication



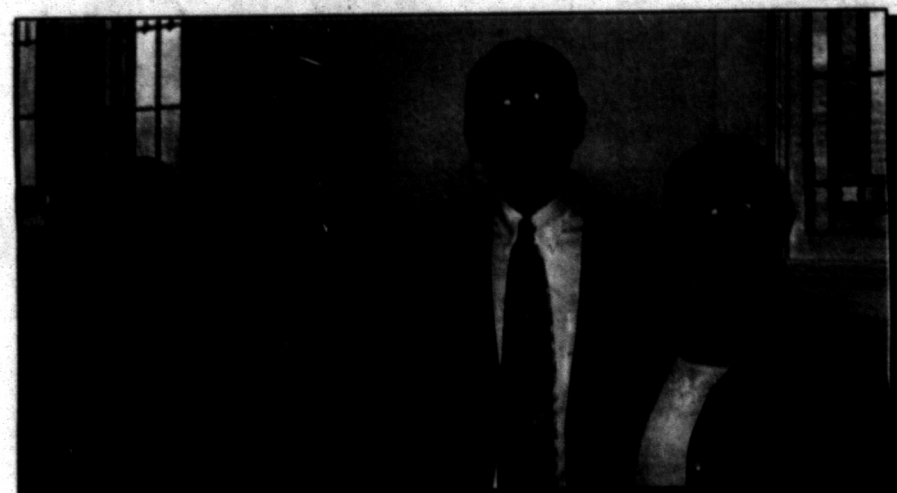
10. Vaughn and Jenkins ordination

REVIVALS AND HOMECOMINGS

- Clear Branch Church, Wesson:** Revival, Sept. 14 - 17; Sun., 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m., both services followed by meals; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Randy Lewman and Clint Presley, speakers; Tim Morrison, music.
- Sylvarena Church, Wesson:** Homecoming, Sept. 14; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 10:30 a.m., followed by covered dish lunch; Jerry Barlow, speaker; Karen Hardy Fisk, music; Stuart Givens, pastor.
- New Prospect Church, Brookhaven:** Homecoming, Sept. 14; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m., followed by lunch and 1:30 p.m.; Robert Speights, speaker; Terry Walker, Steve and Lissy Smith, and Vonda Laird, music.
- North Calvary Church, Philadelphia:** Revival, Sept. 14 - 17; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m., followed by covered dish lunch; discipleship training, 5 p.m.; worship, 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., noon (lunch provided) and 7 p.m.; Don Taylor, speaker; Karen Cumberland, music; Lawrence Runnels, pastor.
- Meadowview Church, Starkville:** Revival, Sept. 19 - 24; Rodney and Mandy Keith, speakers; Jerome Key, music; for more information, call (662) 323-2963.
- Zion Hill Church, Wesson:** Revival, Sept. 14 - 18, 7 p.m.; Matthew Gillion, speaker; Josh McCormick, music; Tom McCormick, pastor.
- First Church, Collins:** Lay renewal weekend, Sept. 12 - 14; Fri., 6:30 a.m.; Sat., 10 a.m.; Sun., 9:45 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Sidney Ellis, coordinator; James E. Smith, pastor.
- Union South Church, Seminary:** 100 year celebration, Sept. 21, 10 a.m., followed by covered dish lunch; Jeff Easterling, speaker.
- Calvary Church, Greenwood:** Revival, Sept. 21 - 24; Sun., 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Billy Smith, speaker; Benny Rigby and special guest, music; Wayne Kimbrough, pastor.
- Sand Ridge Church, Lake:** 90th anniversary homecoming, Sept. 21, 10 a.m.; history by youth and children; Ken West, speaker; old fashion day with lunch and fellowship.
- Hurricane Creek Church, Sandy Hook:** 95th anniversary, Sept. 20 - 21; Sat., 6 p.m. fellowship; Sun., 10:30 a.m., followed by lunch and afternoon services; M.L. Wallace, speaker.
- Bradford Chapel Church, Gore Springs:** 75th anniversary, Sept. 21, 2 p.m.; Joey Hamilton, speaker; for information call (662) 637-2731 or visit www.bradfordchapel.net.
- First Church, Fannin:** Revival, Sept. 21 - 24; Sun., 8:30, 10:50 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Michael Bird, Jay Richardson, Gary Richardson, Ralph Henson, and Rick Henson, speakers; Ron Bird, pastor.
- Center Terrace Church, Canton:** Revival, Sept. 21 - 24; Sun., 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Tommy Mitchell, speaker; Curtis Carter, music.
- Rawls Springs Church, Hattiesburg:** 125th anniversary homecoming and revival, Sept. 21 - 24; Sun., 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Byron Howell, speaker; Robert Fennell, music; John Cockrell, pastor.

STAFF CHANGES

- First Church, Durant,** has called Robert Herring as minister of music. Herring is an employee of M&F bank and resides in Hesterville. Shown are Herring, Kim Herring, pastor Ed McDaniel and Libby McDaniel.



1. Herrings and McDaniels

JUST FOR THE RECORD



15. West family

- New Life Fellowship Church, Oakland,** will be hosting a gospel singing featuring the Shadrix Trio Sept. 20, 7 p.m.
- Willow Pointe Church, Hattiesburg,** is hosting Brian Neal in concert Sept. 25, 7 p.m. For more information call (601) 296-0555.
- Highland Church, Natchez,** is hosting a wildlife expo Sept. 18, 6:30 p.m., featuring Elmer Jackson, David Fortenberry, Gene Hoyt, and speakers from the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, interactive shooting, free food, and door prizes. Free. For tickets call (601) 304-1101 or 442-5263.
- Freedom Church, Laurel,** is hosting a Women Serving God conference Sept. 20, 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., featuring Fay Pearson, Becky Brown, and Kandi Anderson. For information, call (601) 428-1955 or email cbadams255@bellsouth.net.

- Good Hope Church, Newton,** honored pastor John and Wilma West with a reception and gift card for ten years of service to their church Aug. 10. Shown are the Wests.

- Ackerman Church, Ackerman:** Vacation Bible School, July 14 - 18; average attendance, over 100, with several children saved. Shown are the participants.



16. VBS, Ackerman Church

Visit us online at www.mbc.org to learn about all Mississippi Baptist mission opportunities.

COLLEGE NEWS

- The Sarah Gillespie Collection, the most complete collection of art produced by Mississippians in the 20th century, will be housed in a new gallery under construction at the Hattiesburg campus of **William Carey University**. Iris Easterling, curator, and the collection were recently recognized by Laura Bush at the Southeastern Museums Conference in New Orleans.
- Daniel Caldwell, dean of the Cooper School of Missions and Biblical Studies at **William Carey University**, and Dale Holloway, bivocational strategist for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, pose for pictures before Holloway's lecture to WCU church related vocations students. Established by Carey, the Patricia and Dale Holloway Center for Bivocational Ministries was named to honor the memory of Mrs. Holloway and to recognize the work of Dr. Holloway.



2. Caldwell and Holloway

Pastors, congregations seem to differ on Bible issues

NASHVILLE, Tn. (BP) — Research from two studies by LifeWay Research indicates a disconnect between Southern Baptist pastors' view of Scripture and those of the people in their pews.

The research arm of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention conducted one study this spring among a representative sample of 778 Southern Baptist pastors. A second study, in 2007, surveyed 2,500 adults who attend a Protestant church at least once a month, including 260 who attend Southern Baptist churches.

Southern Baptist pastors were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement, "I believe in the divine inspiration of Scripture." Among Southern Baptist pastors, 100% strongly agreed with that statement.

To clarify further their beliefs about Scripture, Southern Baptist pastors were asked to agree or disagree with the statement, "I believe in the inerrancy of Scripture." Among Southern Baptist pastors, 97% strongly agreed with that statement, another two percent somewhat agreed, and

none disagreed.

Ed Stetzer, director of LifeWay Research, noted, "It is clear that the inerrancy debate is settled among the SBC pastors we surveyed. They all believe in inspiration with a very small percent not also affirming inerrancy. This is a remarkably high number."

Although Southern Baptists strongly believe in inerrancy, they indicated that the "battle for the Bible" is not over. LifeWay Research asked for the pastors' level of agreement with the statement, "In the Southern Baptist Convention, the battle for the Bible is over and won."

On this item, opinions differed dramatically from the questions of inspiration and inerrancy. The majority of Southern Baptist pastors disagreed with the statement (21% strongly disagreed and 31% somewhat disagreed). At the same time, a large minority agreed (nine percent strongly agreed while 33% somewhat agreed).

"The numbers remind us that we still have work to do," said Thom S. Rainer, president of LifeWay Christian Resources. "Yes, we have settled the issue of the authority of Scripture in

our confession. That battle is over and done. However, I believe that the battle for the authority and sufficiency of God's Word is never really done. It is as old as the Garden of Eden and will continue until Jesus comes back.

"As we can see, Southern Baptists pastors are overwhelmingly inerrantists — but they are also discerning enough to know that we must always be on guard against compromise and error."

Brad Waggoner, vice president of B&H Publishing Group, in his upcoming book, *The Shape of Faith to Come*, reports that only 69% of adults who attend an SBC church at least once a month strongly agree that "the Bible is the written Word of God and is totally accurate in all that it teaches." Eleven percent in the LifeWay Research survey somewhat agreed with the statement, 11% neither agreed nor disagreed, five percent disagreed somewhat, and three percent disagreed strongly.

Research for Waggoner's book also indicated that only 76% of adults who attend an SBC church at least once a month strongly agree that "the Bible is the authoritative source of truth and wisdom for daily living." Twelve per-

cent somewhat agree, eight percent neither agreed nor disagreed, two percent somewhat disagreed and one percent strongly disagreed.

Scott McConnell, associate director of LifeWay Research, said this shows that, "While Southern Baptist pastors are united in their view of the inerrancy of Scripture, they must be aware that 1 out of 4 people who attend their churches each month consider the Bible less than totally accurate or authoritative."

Research for *The Shape of Faith to Come* was conducted in 2007 among 2,500 adults who attend a Protestant church at least once a month. The Southern Baptist sample within this study provides 95% confidence that sampling error did not exceed +6.1%.

All of the other questions were included in an online survey of 778 Southern Baptist senior pastors in 2008. The pastors agreed to be surveyed online while participating in a previous survey that was mailed to all Southern Baptist pastors. While the number responding to individual questions varies, the sample size provides 95% confidence that sampling error did not exceed +3.5%.

China continuing religious persecutions after Olympics end

BEIJING (BP) — A popular house church leader and his wife were released from government custody in China recently, but that good news was overshadowed by the fact that countless other Chinese Christians still are imprisoned, including bookstore owner Shi Weihang who has been described as "unrecognizable" following his poor treatment in detention.

Zhang "Bike" Mingxuan, chairman of the Federation House—Church, and his wife Xie Fenglan were released from Public Security Bureau custody August 29 but were told they could not return to Beijing until the end of the Paralympics September 16, according to the human rights group China Aid Association.

Since August 6, Zhang and his wife had been on forced vacation, accompanied by about 15 government officials, Zhang's wife told Bob Fu, China Aid's president, in a phone conversation following their release. She said Zhang had been actively evangelizing and advocating the role of the house church to his captors during his detainment.

Before his capture, Zhang was considered one of the most outspoken evangelists in China, traveling mostly on his bike, handing out literature and Bibles and preaching the Gospel, Voice of the Martyrs said.

China Aid and Voice of the Martyrs had circulated a petition while Zhang was in captivity, and 57,000 people signed on to urge the Chinese government to free the pastor and his wife and to "look beyond the physical needs to also consider the deeper, fundamental need

for personal freedom in decisions of faith and belief."

When such a need is fully acknowledged by authorities, the petition said, "the resulting freedom strengthens the people and the country for honorable prosperity."

Representatives from China Aid delivered the petition to the Chinese Embassy in Washington Sept. 4.

"While the release of Pastor Zhang Mingxuan was welcomed by the petitioners, CAA continues to urge the Chinese government to stop its consistent record of illegal religious persecution and to release other Chinese Christians who have been wrongfully imprisoned for their faith ...," China Aid said in a news release September 5.

"CAA and its supporters around the world will continue to press the Chinese government to release these Christians and to act with consistency and responsibility toward religious freedom."

One of the highest profile cases involves Shi Weihang, a Chinese bookstore owner who has been imprisoned and tortured by government authorities. Compass Direct News reported Sept. 5 that Shi is awaiting the outcome of an Aug. 19 court appearance.

The news service said Shi has been denied proper medication and diet for his diabetes. Severe weight loss has made him almost

"unrecognizable" to his closest friends. He first was detained last November and then acquitted of charges in January. In March he was detained again and forced to sign a "confession" saying he had engaged in the printing and distribution of a large number of illegal publications.

Compass Direct said the Public Security Bureau officials in Beijing initially denied having Shi in custody, but after his attorney applied pressure, they allowed him a single visit with his attorney and labeled him a "dangerous religious element."

Shi's family and friends had expected a trial to take place in June, marking the end of three months of detention without charges. No such trial took place.

In August, authorities moved Shi from the Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau back to the Haidian District Detention Center where he was held after his first arrest, Compass Direct said, adding

that an unnamed source speculated that the government held Shi virtually "incommunicado" during the Olympics because of fears that he would use his foreign connections to embarrass China during the Games.

American businessman Ray Sharpe is one of Shi's many foreign friends, and he testified earlier this year to the Chinese Christian's strong patriotism.

"I know him to be a successful travel agent because he works so hard to help all of his clients fall in love with his beloved homeland. He longs for foreigners to understand China's culture, her history, her many proud accomplishments," Sharpe said.

Fu, China Aid's president, strongly condemned Beijing authorities for their cruel and unjust treatment of Shi, the human rights group said in a news release, and he urged them to release Shi as soon as possible to avoid international pressure.

Concern about Shi's treatment

can be registered by calling the Chinese Embassy in Washington, D.C., at 202-338-6688 or by contacting U.S. congressmen and senators through the Capitol switchboard at 202-224-3121. China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs can be called directly at 011-86-10-65592311 or 011-86-10-13910869861. The Beijing Public Security Bureau's Haidian District Substation can be reached by dialing 011-86-10-82510110 or 011-86-10-82519350

OBITUARIES

Jim A. Lindsey, 68, died August 24 at his home in Coffeeville. He was a retired Baptist Minister who was the pastor of Union West Church in Lafayette County, Sylva Rena Church in Water Valley for 12 years, Lou Rand in Clarksdale for 5 years, Darling Church, and Southside Church in Benoit. He was a type setter by trade and worked for Webb Printing. He was a member of Elliot Church in Grenada.

Visitation was August 27 from 1:00 PM until service time at the graveside in Delay Church Cemetery in Water Valle. The graveside service was held at 2:00 PM with E. K. Gordon presiding. Seven Oaks Funeral Home was in charge of the arrangements.

Lindsey is survived by his wife, Veronica Lindsey of Coffeeville; two step-daughters, Amanda Boyd of Laurel and Becky Boyd of Coffeeville; sister, Barbara Soldan of Memphis; and a step-grandchild, Jackson Wayne Boyd.

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Harrisburg Baptist Church invites you to join us in celebrating 75 years of worship and ministry.

September 14th

Great Hymns of Faith, presented by the Sanctuary Choir and Orchestra; 6:00 p.m. Reception to follow.

September 21st

Morning Celebration Services at 8:30 and 11:00 a.m.
Dramatic presentation of the history of Harrisburg, "The Wind In His Fists"; 6:00 p.m.

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Former WMU executive director O'Brien dies at 75

BIRMINGHAM, Al. (Special) — Dellanna West O'Brien, age 75, the first international missionary to serve as executive director/treasurer of national Woman's Missionary Union (WMU), died September 7 in at her home in Frisco, Texas. A massive stroke is believed to be the cause of death.

"Dellanna O'Brien is one of the most amazing women I have ever known," said Wanda S. Lee, O'Brien's successor as executive director/treasurer of WMU. "She possessed a deep love for the Lord and her family, and made countless sacrifices as she led WMU through ten challenging years in our denomination."

"I will remember her as a great friend, leader, educator, innovator, and loving wife and mother — but most of all, as a humble and diligent servant of Christ and his mission."

Kay Cassibry, executive director of Mississippi WMU, said, "When I think of Dellanna O'Brien, my first thought is first and foremost that she

was a dear, personal friend, and mentor. She took me under her wing as a new state executive director and never let go.



O'Brien

"Even after she retired from her WMU position, we met and talked often and, every time, she had nothing but encouraging and motivating words to share with me. She was a strong, visionary leader who saw the needs and then did everything she could do to meet those needs, in the most gracious, loving ways."

"The WMU family has lost a great leader, but also a dear friend and supporter. She will be deeply missed."

O'Brien assumed leadership of the national missions organization in 1989. In addition to leading approximately 1.1 million women, girls, and preschoolers in missions education and involvement, co-ed missions materials made their debut during her tenure and three new co-ed missions organizations were begun: Adults on Mission, Youth on Mission, and

Children in Action.

Many of WMU's hands-on missions initiatives were also begun under O'Brien's leadership, including:

- Volunteer Connection, to plan and direct a volunteer program for hands-on missions experiences.

- Christian Women's Job Corps, a ministry seeking to equip women for life and employment in a Christian context.

- WorldCrafts, a ministry that imports handmade crafts from impoverished artisans worldwide and markets them in the United States, providing these artisans with income for food, shelter, education, and medicine.

- Project HELP, which gives awareness and visibility to a specific social and moral issue and ties in local, national, and international projects to assist the church in addressing the designated issue.

Born on July 20, 1933, in Wichita Falls, Texas, O'Brien earned a bachelor of science degree from Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas, in 1953, and worked as an elementary school teacher from 1953-63.

For the next nine years, 1963-71, she served with her husband and children as missionaries to Indonesia through the Foreign Mission Board (now International Mission Board). While there, she taught English and piano at a seminary in Semarang.

Upon returning to the United States, O'Brien pursued graduate studies and received a masters of education degree from Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, Texas, in 1972, and a doctorate in education from Virginia Tech University in Blacksburg, Va., in 1983.

She also holds honorary degrees from Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas, University of Richmond in Virginia, and Judson College in Marion, Al.

Author of four books, O'Brien is survived by her husband of 56 years, Bill; two daughters, Denise Basden of Frisco, Texas, and Erin Puryear of Richmond, Va.; a son, William Ross O'Brien of Dallas, Texas; and six grandchildren.

A memorial service was held September 10 at Preston Trail Community Church in Frisco, Texas.

Baptists enjoy serving during Democratic National Convention

DENVER (BP) — As Democrats celebrated the nomination of Barack Obama as their presidential nominee in Denver, Southern Baptist volunteers continued at work behind the scenes providing law enforcement personnel with thousands of meals and cold drinks.

The effort, called Love Denver, was a massive undertaking to serve nearly 10,000 meals a day to police, FBI, Secret Service, and fire personnel charged with keeping the peace at the 2008 Democratic National Convention (DNC) in Denver.

Some 600 volunteers were involved in the ministry, most from local Southern Baptist churches, but some from farther away.

Volunteers said the process of building relationships with police became easier with each passing day as they interacted over food and ice chests filled with bottled water and energy drinks. "You could see the first day they were thinking to themselves, 'Who are these people?'" said Pam Erwin, a volunteer from Parker, Colo., "but as the days have passed, their guard has dropped and it's easier to start conversations with them."

Erwin said she and her husband Dave, members of First Baptist in Evergreen, Co., had several conversations about the Gospel this week. "Monday I just said hello and was having casual conversation with an officer and he just out of the blue said, 'One problem I have always had with Christianity

is the Trinity.' So we discussed it for quite some time and I brought him a book the next day. Today, another volunteer said he saw him reading it."

Cynthia Reno had similar experiences on her food-serving shifts. Reno, a member of Four Way Church in Lupton, Co., said she volunteered as a way of "walking my ministry. Putting my faith into action. They are overwhelmed that we would do this for them and when they ask why, it's very easy to tell them," Reno said. "(W)e started handing out peacemaker Bibles and several of them were so glad to receive them."

The Bibles, specially designed for police officers, went out to every food site and quickly became popular distribution items.

Reno served at police feeding stations at the downtown Marriott hotel and the library. Both positions were strategically located near much of the DNC activity. "You have to be sensitive to what these guys are going through," Reno said. "One day several of them had just come in from managing a protest and you could tell they were exhausted and really on edge. They didn't need us to try to make conversation then. They just needed a cold drink and a chance to unwind."

Many law enforcement personnel have expressed their gratitude for the service they received. "We appreciate you guys," officer Jeff McDonald of the Denver Police Department said amidst a sea of Love Denver

fluorescent yellow T-shirts at Riverside Church, where food was received and divided up for distribution.

McDonald said he was on hand for other major events, such as Pope John Paul II's World Youth Day in 1993 and the Summit of Eight world leaders' meeting in 1997. "This is the first time we've had this kind of operation," McDonald said of the feeding effort. "If we wanted something to eat back then, we had to bring it in ourselves."

Reactions like that are why Reno knows her efforts and those of the other volunteers will have far-reaching effect. "They see something different about us," she said. "Our group had some police officers cheer for us when we walked in from the street... I know this is going to have a lasting impact."

Each day volunteers prepared and served some 9,600 meals, feeding first responders at 11 different sites throughout the downtown

area, in a project spearheaded by local Southern Baptist churches and the Mile High Association. The 600 Baptist volunteers worked eight-hour shifts, staffing feeding stations 24 hours a day.

More than \$250,000 worth of food and drink — paid for by law enforcement agencies — was prepared and delivered during the Democrats' four-day convention, which drew 4,440 delegates, 15,000 members of the media, and thousands of others to the city.

Parrish to join Collegiate Ministry Dept.

JACKSON, Ms. (Special) — Beverly Parrish was selected on August 26 by the Executive Committee of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board to serve as associate director of the board's Collegiate Ministry Department. She replaces Christy Carley, who resigned earlier this year.

"I am personally thrilled to have Beverly coming on board with us. She will help us continue the tradition of excellence in the Collegiate Ministry Department," said department director Weaver McCracken. "She has personally expressed to me her great appreciation and admiration for the work Mississippi Baptist Student Unions are doing and is eager to come alongside and join us."

Prior to her present position as associate director of Baptist Student Ministry at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas, Parrish served as:

- associate director and interim director of the Baptist Student Union (BSU) at the University of Mississippi in Oxford (1999-2002).
- student missions intern at the Baptist General Convention of Texas in Dallas (1996-98).
- design Intern at Student Discipleship Ministries in Ft. Worth (1995-99).



Parrish

- community education coordinator at Brazosport College in Lake Jackson, Texas (1994).

- director of the Baptist Student Union at Alvin Community College in Alvin, Texas, and Brazosport College (1993-94).

"Throughout her ministry career, she has exhibited a high level of interest and commitment to mobilizing college students. Beyond her passion for missions, her experience both on and off the campus has been extensive, which has helped prepare her for this new role," McCracken said.

Parrish, a native of Houston, Texas, holds a master of divinity degree ('98) from Southwestern Seminary in Ft. Worth, and a bachelor of arts in telecommunications from Baylor University in Waco, Texas.

"I am looking forward to the opportunity to work with Mississippi BSU again, especially in the area of missions," Parrish said. "There is such a strong tradition of Mississippi BSU students serving as summer missionaries. I am honored to be able to serve in this capacity and look forward to the opportunity to continue that great tradition."

Editor's note: Parrish will begin her new MBCB duties on October 15. In the meantime, she can be contacted at beverly@aggielms.org.

THE VILLAGE VIEW



Dr. Rory Lee, Executive Director

P.O. Box 27
Clinton, MS 39060-0027
(601) 922-2242

www.baptistchildrensvillage.com

GIFTS OF HONOR AND MEMORY

A portion of The Village View is dedicated each month to a gift of honor and memory. Many churches and individuals select to give a gift of honor through this feature. The feature is a way to honor a person or a church. The feature is a way to honor a person or a church. The feature is a way to honor a person or a church.

AUGUST 25 — SEPTEMBER 7 HONORS

Mr. Ernest Blakeley
Mrs. Fern M. Lyter
Patrick Conerly
Mr. & Mrs. Henry W. Darden
Mr. Ed Cox
Mrs. Fern M. Lyter
Ralph & Mary Keating
Lent & Linda Thomas
Lynn O'Neal
Poplar Springs Cemetery Assoc.
Rolin Kimbrough Steed
Mrs. Joyce B. Rodgers

MEMORIALS

Ms. Madeline Anthony
Ms. Margaret Ann Finnie
Mrs. Dorothy Bates
Dan P. Herrington
Henry Leonard Wilson
Dick Bath
Mr. & Mrs. Henry F. Peebles Jr.
Cecil W. Bonner
Mr. Bobby C. Gardner
A. W. Bouchillion
Ms. Mary M. Morgan
Dorothy Broadway
Mrs. Betty L. Hall
Rev. Edward "Ed" R. Bryon
Fidelis SSC, Morrison Heights BC
Mr. & Mrs. Rodney Bevil
Spring Hill BC-Wesson
Mr. & Mrs. Gerald Buchanan
D. B. Byrd
Mrs. Patsy F. Byrd
Mr. Roger Carr
Mr. & Mrs. Paul D. Allen
Mr. Ronnie Brent
Evelyn W. Clark
Ms. Anita L. Cummins
Vinnie M. Constanzi
Mrs. Leo Routh
Mr. Morley Costner
Mr. & Mrs. Harry Neal Corder
Mr. Hubbard Daughdrill
Mrs. Doris B. Cole
Grace Davis
Stanton BC-Natchez
Mr. W. R. (Roscoe) Davis
Mr. & Mrs. Bobby G. Fleming
Mr. Kirby Dillingham
Mr. & Mrs. Paul D. Allen
Corrine Ross Dorrough
Mrs. June Ezell
Mrs. Lucy Petit Dukes
Mr. & Mrs. Harold Dacus

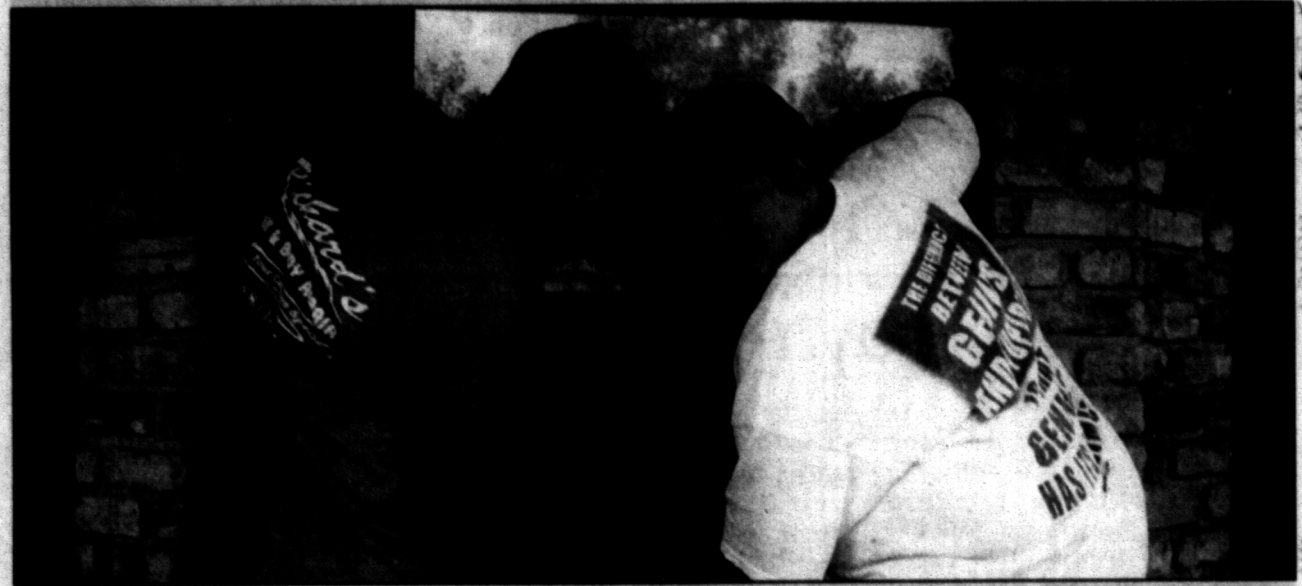
Mary Kathryn Embry
Mr. & Mrs. Larry P. Franklin
Mr. Henry Farmer
Mr. & Mrs. Paul D. Allen
Mr. Jerrell Ferguson
Mr. & Mrs. Terry E. Champion
Mrs. Ruby Freeland
Mr. & Mrs. Robert E. Green
Geneva Gardner
Mr. Bobby C. Gardner
Odell Godwin
Mr. & Mrs. Frank O. Crosthwait Jr.
Margaret Gordon
Ms. Joyce N. Burnette
Forrest Z. Goss
Mrs. Georgia G. McCormick
Mr. Vernon Grantham
Tucker's Crossing BC-Laurel
Claude & Willie Griffin
Mrs. Dot Griffin & Children
Mrs. Elizabeth Brooks Griffin
Mr. & Mrs. William S. Ezelle
Flora Lee Hamilton
Mrs. Nell D. Fenoglio
Bobby Harrill
Stanton BC-Natchez
Hazel Harrington
Mrs. Linda S. Campbell
Mrs. Laura Harris
Mr. & Mrs. Harold Dacus
Jimmy Harrison
Mrs. Dot Griffin & Children
Jettie Henry
Mr. & Mrs. William L. Butler
Betty Herod
Mrs. Betty Pender
Will Hickman
Ms. Mary Jones Adams
Jean Hill
Ms. Barbara B. Easterling
Barton Hyer
Jimmy & Bonnie Hollingsworth
Maurice Kelly, Sr.
Ms. Mary M. Morgan
Jeff Kennedy
Judy & Dave Lacy
Pat Key
Mr. & Mrs. Steve West
Gloria Kincade
Jimmy & Bonnie Hollingsworth
Mr. Carl Lee
Mrs. Doris B. Cole
Mrs. Bernice Leffler
Mrs. Pat Callender
Buster Lofton
Concord BC-McCall Creek

Larry Magee
Mr. & Mrs. William S. Ezelle
W. A. Marshall
Mrs. Annie Mae Grantham & Family
Sidney Mayo
Mr. & Mrs. Miller P. Holmes
Mrs. Ruth McAdams
Mr. & Mrs. Clyde Woods
Ruby Starnes McClelland
Ed & Janet Chisolm
Nathan & Anna Chisolm
Russell Chisolm
Katy & Chris Goodin
Mrs. Theresa McPhail
Deer Creek BC-Rolling Fork
Teresa & Hermann McPhail
Mr. & Mrs. Clifton Porter
Elaine McRae
Mr. & Mrs. Clyde Revette
Mrs. Elizabeth Melton
Rev. & Mrs. James A. Breland
Mrs. Myrtle Moore
Mr. & Mrs. Hubert T. Kendrick
Elizabeth Moreton
Mr. & Mrs. James M. Haley
Freddie H. Murff
Mrs. Ralph H. Marble
Mr. & Mrs. Robert H. McCain
Willie O'Neal
Harry & Alyene Johns
Gary & Glenda Miller
John Oakley
Mr. & Mrs. James C. Brents Jr.
Mrs. Sadie Pennington
Mrs. Dot Griffin & Children
Mr. Billy Raden
Mr. & Mrs. Mike Allen & Family
Blanch Randle
Mrs. Betty Pender
Sue Rials
Faithful Workers SSC, Salem BC
Mr. John Richmond
Mrs. Joseph Dale
Norma Ridell
Mr. & Mrs. Gerald Buchanan
Miss Mary Hollinger "Holly" Saunders
Ms. Beverly Alexander
Mr. & Mrs. Joe Heranney Sr.
Jimmy & Bonnie Hollingsworth
Ms. Lillian Sandifer
Mrs. Don V. Schilling
Jo Wylie
Mark Wylie
Mrs. Claudia Cage
Mrs. Faye Steed
Mr. & Mrs. James Rhea
Love
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Hyer
Mrs. Laurie Stewart
Mr. & Mrs. Harold Lowery
Ms. Joy Stone
Ms. Margaret Ann Finnie
Mr. Gerald Sullivan
Mr. & Mrs. Rober Sullivan & Family
Mr. Floyd Taylor
East Louisville Baptist Church
Mrs. Shirley Taylor
Mr. & Mrs. Leo N. Scruggs
Mr. Jimmy Touchstone
Mr. & Mrs. Harold Lowery
Barbara Trammell
Mr. & Mrs. B. C. Peacock
Juanita Turner
Mr. & Mrs. Rodney Bevil
Mr. James Watkins
Mrs. Joy B. Roberts
Mrs. Shirley N. White
Mr. Paul F. Mlakar
Mr. & Mrs. Edward C. Lanier
Fennimore Craig, P.C.
Lathrop & Gage L.C.
The Jackson Family
Mr. Jim Kean
Mrs. June Wilkinson
Ruth SSC, Briar Hill BC-Florence
Gilbert Williams
Tinsley BC
Hillman Williams
Mr. & Mrs. A. C. Strickland
Mrs. Betty Williamson
Jim & Pat Callender

Volunteers from churches in Copiah, Lincoln and Pike County recently assisted the staff at The Baptist Children's Village, Dickerson Place Campus in Brookhaven with maintenance and grounds projects. One church also led recreational activities for the residents.



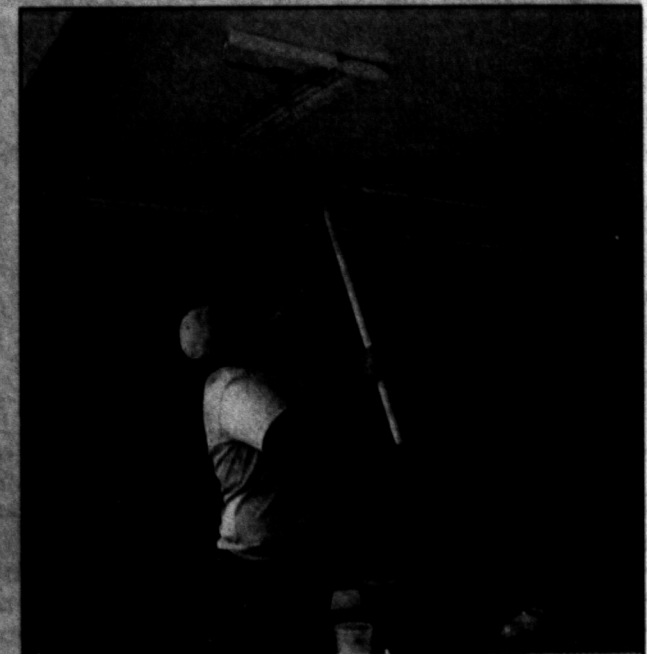
Members of Easthaven Baptist Church in Lincoln County helped with painting around campus as well as with other projects and hosted a fun day for the residents.



The youth group of New Site Baptist Church in Lincoln County worked on maintenance and grounds projects.



Men from Pilgrim's Rest Baptist Church in Copiah County spent the day repairing the storage barn.



Members of Tangipahoa Baptist Church, Calvary Baptist Church and New Zion Baptist Church all of Pike County joined together to pool resources for a work day on the campus.

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

Come One, Come All

Matthew 22:1-14

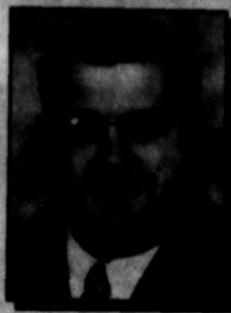
By Bobby McKay

A few years ago my wife and I received an invitation to the inauguration gala for one of our elected officials. Upon reading the invitation we quickly let some of our friends and family members know. In making preparations to attend the festivities, we gave careful attention to each aspect of the event and even the invitation itself. We read the invitation more than once and were honored to be included. I rented a tuxedo and Amy spent more time than usual in preparing for the big evening. When the night came we were excited and for some unknown reason, nervous. As we entered into the building that night in downtown Jackson I came to a couple of conclusions. One, there is no such thing as comfortable rental shoes and second-

ly, we were allowed to be a part of this memorable function because of the generosity and thoughtfulness of someone else. We will examine in this week's lesson what it means to be the recipient of an important invitation, rejection, pride, and ultimately, punishment.

I. The Interpretation

It is important in this parable to realize that this is actually the end of a trilogy of teachings that began in the twenty-eighth verse of the previous chapter. Jesus uses the previous two parables to illuminate the neglect of responsibility of the workers in the vineyard, as well as the rebellious actions of wicked men. William Barclay offered this commentary when approaching parables, "In interpreting a parable it is normally a first principle that every parable



Bobby McKay

has only one main point and that the details are not to be stressed." If we as readers or teachers of the Bible strive to find an explanation of every detail we make the mistake of treating Scripture as solely allegory and we miss the intent of the passage to transform our lives.

II. The Invitation

With a better grasp of parables now fresh on our minds, look with me at the importance of this teaching. It is apparent that the king in this parable is representative of the Heavenly Father. The son represents Jesus and the marriage invitation is a compelling picture on two different levels. First and foremost, it is imperative that we realize the Jewish undertones in this story. Christ is affirming that the Jews were God's chosen people. Secondly, He was teaching that through the prophets and now through Jesus Himself, they were rejecting the invitation for salvation and eternal life.

Wedding feasts were important social events in the times of

Jesus. If someone in your family or a close friend was getting married, you expected and anticipated the invitation to join the festivities. What made the invitation unique was the fact that the date and time were not given when the invitations were sent out. The ones receiving the invitation knew to be ready when they were beckoned to come and participate in the banquet. The great point we can see here is that to be included in the festivities took precedence over everything else on your schedule.

III. The Indifference

Here we can see where the parable makes an unexpected turn. It was unheard of to decline an invitation to a wedding. On top of that, they were turning their noses up at the king! In verse four we see that the king has made every preparation for his guests. He provides the best sacrifice for the dinner and still "they paid no attention" (NASB). They were indifferent to the provisions the king had offered. Friends, that is the epitome of pride and everyone that fails to place their faith and trust in Christ is just as offensive to God.

IV. The Inclusiveness

Obviously by now, you understand the point Jesus is striving to make. As the Jews by in large rejected the Messiah, God made known that the invitation would be extended to include "those who were not worthy." This not only includes the Gentiles in surrounding areas, but He is also talking about you and me! Jesus was concerned with a much wider scale than just the Jews of his day. He had a future in mind that includes each of us.

V. The Imposters

Verses eleven through fourteen should pierce our hearts as believers. Church memberships have provided countless people with a false sense of security. People come into our services every Sunday with the knowledge they are lost, but continue to stay in their pride and refuse the invitation to receive eternal life. If you are an imposter, respond to the invitation given through Jesus.

McKay is pastor of Oakvale Church, Oak Vale.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Serving the Lord Faithfully

1 Samuel 2:12; 18-26, 34-35; 3:1-10; 11-21; 4:1a

By Ginger M. Caughman

Jimmie Knox, my pastor for 10 years, often said: "If you're not as close to God as you once were, make no mistake about who has moved!"

Scripture promises the faithful Christian, "The Lord is near to all who call on Him in truth" (Psalm 145: 18 NIV).

Are you faithful? To your spouse? Your family? Your church? In essence: Are you faithful to GOD? In our text, Samuel and his parents provide Biblical models of faithfulness to God. What can we learn anew from these familiar stories? How did Samuel learn to serve God so faithfully all his life?

We learn from good and bad influences. Hannah raised Samuel until he was weaned, then took him to live in the temple. From childhood Samuel saw both good (Eli) and bad examples (Eli's wicked sons) of serving

God. God called Samuel and empowered him to serve.

When Samuel's parents visited him annually, Eli blessed them. Hannah had three sons and two daughters. Meanwhile Samuel grew up "in the presence of the Lord" (2:18-26). Did you notice the way Samuel's growth parallels how Jesus grew? (See Luke 2:52).

Samuel was faithful to his assigned jobs and prepared for new ones. "He who is faithful in small things is faithful also in much." (Luke 12:48b).

Jane Sullivan Everett heard from her sister about their soup ministry. Prompted by the Holy Spirit, Jane said, "We could do that!" and our soup ministry was born. None of us can do anything alone. Jane enlisted others to help prepare and deliver soup weekly during Winter. The ministry has flourished giving nourishment to body and soul. Gail Mayhall



Caughman

noticed a large Spanish population in our area and began English classes. Mary Joyce Walters holds Bible studies in her home serving a light supper for those coming directly from work.

"Speak Lord for your servant is listening." (1 Samuel 3:9b

NIV)

Leading workshops and writing Bible Curriculum for the Baptist Sunday School Board (now LifeWay) for many years, I once heard Nolan Johnson, New Orleans Baptist Associational Missions Director, challenge teachers with a profound thought. Samuel couldn't distinguish between his teacher's voice and the voice of God! Teachers and preachers carry a huge responsibility representing God. Through Jesus, all Christians are called to be priests to others (1 Peter 2:9).

What can you do when you're not sure about God's call? Asked the first time to write Bible curriculum, I was undecided. I had prayed but didn't have peace about accepting the

assignment. I asked a friend for advice. I remember entering the office of Dr. George Harrison at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Dr. Harrison was gracious and friendly but his office was chilly. He put a flannel shirt from his chair around my shoulders. I remember only one sentence, "Every opportunity is not an answer." I didn't accept that assignment. Later for the first time ever there was a "Prospective Writer's Conference" at Ridgecrest, NC. What a blessing to receive instruction from mature Christians. Later, I wrote Bible curriculum for ten years. I know God prepared that conference for me. Clarify divine instructions by prayer, Scripture, and wise counsel from other Christians.

Found Faithful was the title of an old study course book, which characterized the life of my father and paternal grandfather. J. P. Morris, Sr. had marked in pencil only one passage. The words defined for me his life and Christian testimony.

"God is our Friend. He is seeking to do something for us, more than He is trying to

get something from us. He requires something of us. The good teacher makes requirements of the pupil. The wise parent must require something of the child. Christian stewardship is not man's plan for raising money; but God's plan for raising His children. God is not after dollars for emergencies, but after Christians with New Testament consciences." (Merrill D. Moore, Broadman, 1953). My parents and both sets of grandparents gave me examples of faithfulness.

"God empowers His people as we make a commitment to serve Him faithfully."

Dr. Jimmie Knox preached at the funeral of his wife, Patti, calling her "a moral compass" for him and their children. She faithfully served God beside her husband for 56-years. With courage he faithfully and confidently followed God's call to minister on mission in Pennsylvania.

Each new day is another opportunity to faithfully draw near to God!

Caughman teaches a senior ladies Sunday School class at First Church, Magee.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be

accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and

white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items are generally

not publishable. Photographs can not be returned. Please do not attach photos with tape or staples.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape-, building-, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

THE BAPTIST
Record

Garaywa serving as national hub for disaster relief

CLINTON, Miss. (BP and local reports) — The night's warm breeze gave way to a drizzle as Kentucky Baptist disaster relief units rolled out of Garaywa Camp and Conference Center in Clinton, a Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union camp located in this small town west of Jackson.

The camp has long served as a staging ground for disaster relief operations, including those following Hurricane Katrina in 2005. "I was here and went down there after Katrina," says Michael Webb, who served on a recovery unit then and today volunteers with the feeding unit as Kentucky Baptists prepare to serve 30,000 meals a day in Thibodaux, La., nearly four hours away.

While most Southern Baptist disaster relief units routinely handle 10,000-30,000 meals per day, units in Houma and Baton Rouge will handle American Red Cross and Salvation Army requests for 110,000-150,000 meals as Louisiana Gulf Coast residents without power seek food and refuge.

Feeding units are traveling to affected areas from Arkansas, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Oklahoma, Virginia, and Kentucky, with more possibly to follow. Many of these units also will begin recovery operations in coming days as residents return home to find flooded or wind-damaged homes and downed trees.

Places such as Baton Rouge will be in feeding operations into next week. Evacuees are still making use of shelters in Shreveport and Alexandria, La.

As residents return home, they are asking disaster relief organizations and FEMA for essentials such as blue tarps to keep the rain out of damaged homes.

On September 2 as disaster relief units made final preparations at Garaywa for response to Hurricane Gustav, many Baptist volunteers reflected on Katrina, a storm that changed their ministry lives.

Kentucky disaster relief communications specialist Johnny Kitchen said he decided to use his ham radio skills after he went 8-10 days without talking to his wife, who worked in a feeding unit in New Orleans following Katrina.

"I was in communications in the Army," he said. "When I couldn't talk to my wife for more than a week because cell service was down, that's when I decided to use my interests to help people in trouble."

Today Kitchen will join Tom Westerfield as they pull a trailer packed with ham radio, shortwave radio, scanners, and a special communications system that allows them, via the web, to communicate with the North American Mission Board's disaster operations center in Alpharetta, Ga.

"If you get into a disaster situation and you can't communicate, you can get in trouble," said Westerfield, who learned the craft more than 30 years ago.

After a long night of preparing generators and gas containers, they enjoyed a breakfast of pancakes, sausage links, cereal, and coffee prepared by Garaywa chef Greg Hicks and his staff. Afterward, a red 18-wheeler and half-dozen other vehicles began the 215-mile trip to Thibodaux.

During the overall response to Gustav, Southern Baptists have deployed 41 feeding units to prepare and serve more than



MAKING PLANS — Baptist Relief workers from the Kentucky Baptist Feeding Unit look at a map at Garaywa Camp and Conference Center in Clinton before moving out to sites affected by Hurricane Gustav. (BP photo by Justin Veneman)

500,000 meals to victims, first responders, and volunteers in hurricane-affected areas and at regional shelters. Another 17 shower units have provided victims and workers with about 2,000 showers.

The 58 feeding and shower units are being staffed and mobilized by 21 state Southern Baptist conventions, including those in Alabama, Virginia Baptist Mission Board, Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia, Arkansas, Missouri, Ohio, Kansas/Nebraska, Iowa, Michigan, Tennessee, Oklahoma, Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, Baptist General Convention of Texas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, Arizona, New Mexico, and California.

Heavy rains have hampered relief efforts. An Arkansas disaster relief team serving in Alexandria, La., awoke September 3 to find their personal vehicles flooded and two inches of water in their food preparation kitchen unit. None of the equipment was damaged, but personal vehicles sustained water damage.

Hurricane Ike appears to be heading into the Gulf of Mexico after slamming Cuba, and plans are underway to have Garaywa serve as an evacuation area if necessary for volunteers currently working disaster relief for Hurricane Gustav in south Louisiana.

Embryonic stem cell research may soon prove to be obsolete

WASHINGTON (BP) — Scientists continue to deal blows to the campaign for embryonic stem cell research, some by shifting their allegiance to a more ethical form of experimentation and some by discovering new means of creating stem cells that do not harm donors.

Prominent scientists previously committed to embryonic stem cell research (ESCR) apparently have shifted their attention away from that method to the reprogramming of stem cells. Reprogramming involves the conversion of normal human cells into stem cells that are, in effect, embryonic in nature.

Meanwhile, Japanese researchers announced on August 22 they had created stem cells with the properties of embryonic ones from the wisdom teeth of a 10-year-old girl.

The developments seem to provide further evidence that advances in such therapies can be accomplished without the unethical step of extracting stem cells from a five- or six-day-old embryo, an action that

results in the destruction of the tiny human being. Reprogramming is supported by pro-lifers and does not raise the same ethical questions.

Harvard Stem Cell Institute's George Daley, a former president of the International Society for Stem Cell Research, is promoting reprogrammed stem cells, the online newsletter BioEdge reported August 14. Reprogrammed stem cells are also known as induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSCs).

Only three years ago, Daley testified before a U.S. Senate committee that reprogramming was "extremely high-risk" and cloning for ESCR was preferred, according to BioEdge.

Daley and fellow researchers have used reprogrammed stem cells to produce cell lines for 10 diseases, including muscular dystrophy, juvenile diabetes, Parkinson's disease, and Down syndrome, according to the journal Cell, BioEdge reported.

"We wanted to produce a large number of disease models for ourselves, our collabora-

tors, and the stem cell research community to accelerate research," Daley said. "The original embryonic stem cell lines are generic, and allow you to ask only basic questions. But these new lines are valuable tools for attacking the root causes of disease. Our work is just the beginning for studying thousands of diseases in a Petri dish."

As a result, Daley and other scientists have progressed further using reprogrammed cells "in six months than he had in years toiling over embryonic stem cells," according to BioEdge.

The California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM) appears to be moving toward reprogramming, or iPSC, research as well, according to BioEdge. In an August 13 news release, CIRM described itself as "the largest source of funding for embryonic and pluripotent stem cell research in the world" after long calling itself a funding source only for ESCR, the newsletter reported.

"It appears that the CIRM's love affair with slow, ineffi-

cient, expensive, ethically fraught and legally complex human embryonic stem cells may be drawing to a close," according to BioEdge, which says it seeks to promote ethics and compassion in medicine.

Bioethics specialist Wesley Smith wrote of the developments on his weblog, "It may not yet be a full fledged exodus, but it would appear that the tide has changed dramatically."

iPSCs gained worldwide attention in November when research teams in Japan and Wisconsin reported they converted normal human skin cells into stem cells that were effectively embryonic.

Embryonic stem cells are considered pluripotent, meaning they can develop into all of the different cell types in the body. Adult stem cells, also referred to as non-embryonic stem cells, typically have been regarded as multipotent, meaning they can form many, though not all, of the body's cell types. The 2007 study results showed adult cells can become pluripotent.

Stem cells are the body's

master cells that can develop into other cells and tissues, giving hope for the development of cures for a variety of diseases and other ailments.

November's reports were issued only days after cloning pioneer Ian Wilmut startled the scientific world by announcing he had abandoned research, or therapeutic, cloning in favor of the reprogramming method.

News of research showing wisdom teeth can be used to create embryonic-like stem cells came from scientists at Japan's National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology.

"This is a significant step in two ways," research team leader Hajime Ogushi told the news service Agence France-Presse. "One is that we can avoid the ethical issues of stem cells because wisdom teeth are destined to be thrown away anyway."

"Also, we used teeth that had been extracted three years ago and had been preserved in a freezer. That means that it's easy for us to stock this source of stem cells."